

ARABIC LITERATURE, BEIRUT

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Review of the Local Arabic Press
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BEIRUT (Editor: Muhyiddin Husni, Sunni-Moslem, opposition)

fully supports the criticism which the report of Amil Lahhud, Chairman of the Parliamentary Financial Committee, has leveled at the 1951 Budget, and praises his proposals for the imposition of three direct taxes: land tax, inheritance tax and tax on the lands which have been improved by the construction of irrigation canals. The paper hopes that the Chamber of Deputies will adopt these proposals before concluding its present term so that it will do a face-saving act even though belatedly.

AL-HAYAT (Editor: Kamil Muruwa, Shia-Moslem, independent)

calls upon the Lebanese statesmen and people to face their vital problems with earnestness and determination and not to pre-occupy themselves with speculations about the next elections and with noisy celebrations of religious and other festivities. "These people whose press, politicians and government have, for many years, been distracting them with internal partisan politics and with elections, are today opening their eyes to see the realities of the international situation and to find themselves in the midst of an uncontrollable dizziness. What applies to the Lebanese people applies also to many of the other Arab countries. They have cheated us and we have cheated ourselves by the meanings of independence. We have fancied that independence has magic and alone performs miracles. But independence is one thing and isolation is another. When we isolated ourselves in the recent years, we paid the price of independence in the Palestine battle until our ribs began to crack one after the other. And now we find ourselves faced with international conditions in which we have had no hand. Nevertheless, we must say our word regarding these conditions. This word will not be ours, whatever it may be..."

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[redacted] in connection with the forthcoming meeting of the Arab League Political Committee, that the meeting will be held primarily in compliance with America's urgent request so that the Arabs may or may not regard Communist China as an aggressor. The Communist then recalls that the last meeting of the Political Committee was held upon the request of the United States for regarding North Korea as aggressor against South Korea. Admitting the great importance of the American request, Qasbiq argues that the Arab governments must discuss firstly and without delay their own co-operation, their own groupings and

- 2 -

AL-HAYAT'S special correspondent writes the following report on Communist activities in Lebanon:

"According to information reaching official departments charged with combating Communism, the Communists have decided to abate the vigor of their direct efforts and to concentrate their attention on the exploitation of the circumstances through which the country is now passing.

"This information has been responsible for the several meetings the responsible officials at the Ministry of Interior have held for taking new measures against Communist efforts. We understand that these measures are based on the principle of passing severe judgments on persons accused of Communist activities; and on granting extensive powers to the departments charged with observing and combating the Communists and their efforts. It is expected that these measures will be put into effect within the next few weeks."

AL-'ANAL (Maronite, opposition, organ of the Lebanese Phalange Party)

deploras the lack of social justice and economic opportunities in Lebanon because of the policy followed by the government. Lebanon suffers from two grave social ills, the paper complains. Unemployment and migration. There are 45,000 unemployed workers in Lebanon "who present pictures of misery and hardship in their widest and deepest sense and who threaten the country with moral disintegration and the spread of chaos and crimes.....This is a strong incentive for spurring the government to wake up, to act cautiously and to promote a just social and a creative economic policy for saving the country from the hardships and calamities which would be created by this need, poverty and unemployment." The paper then complains that migration is increasing and that 7,000 Lebanese left Lebanon last year. "It is not the economic factor alone which is driving the youths to leave their homeland...but their disgust and loss of faith in a country where conscience does not exist and where dignity is impaired. Thus liberty and life are not safeguarded and dignity and right are not upheld because of the methods of the government and of the mentality of the rulers..."

AD-DIYAR (Pro-government, Greek-Orthodox)

editorializes on the position of Lebanon and of the other Arab countries toward the present international situation and says in effect that the Arabs would have unhesitatingly joined the democratic camp were it not for the futile policy the United States and the other members of the democratic camp have followed in the Arab East. However, the calamities that have befallen them at the hands of the Western and the Eastern camps make the Arabs universally inclined to assume an onlooker's position. The paper then continues:

- 3 -

"The Arab peoples do not fully know the purpose of asking them to join the democratic camp and the nature of the plan which the Western democracies are presenting to the Arab governments. Are these plans at least sufficient for ensuring the defense of an important area which is based on oil if an armed conflict would breakout between the East and the West? Furthermore, the Arab peoples do not know the price the United States and the Western democracies will pay in lieu of the danger to which they will expose themselves in the event they join the Anglo-American front... But these peoples feel that the American demand is assuming the nature of pressure more than the nature of persuasion and that the Arab governments that are known for their propensity toward the democratic front are studying the American demands and hesitating to take a final and decisive position. This is encouraging the present feelings of the Arab peoples.

"However, it is the duty of the Arab governments to understand the present international situation, to keep their nerves and not to surrender to any pressure. They must not at all be lenient in any national issue. Indeed, they must sell and buy like the others. They must insist that the price be at least equal to the danger toward which they are heading. The Western democracies must understand on their part that every sacrifice that may be made by the Arab peoples without return would be a new thorn in the side of Arab democratic co-operation which has until now been bled by many thorns. It has become evident to the United States and to others that money, weapons and armies will not be enough to ensure the defense of an important area like the Middle East if this defense is not based on the idea of defense in the hearts of the peoples themselves. The Korean war is a glowing example of the validity of this statement.

"The Arabs have a sacred cause, i.e. the Palestine cause. No one could gain sincere Arab co-operation and prejudice at the same time the sanctity of that cause. The Arabs absolutely refuse to see others defending their frontiers. If intentions were good and if the Americans would arm and help the Arabs to defend their countries, the Americans would get the sincere and true co-operation they are seeking. But if the Americans think of another form of co-operation, then it would be better for them, before the Arabs, to encourage the Arab states to remain neutral so that they would not weaken themselves in this dangerous area while thinking at the same time that they are endeavoring to strengthen themselves in it."

TELEGRAPH (Editor: Nesib Metni, Maronite, opposition)

demands that Lebanon assume a neutral stand on the present international situation and says that "when we support neutrality we do so in order to save Lebanon from destruction and to prevent the shedding of the blood of our youths."

- 4 -

ASH-SHARQ (Editor: Khairi Ka'ki, Sunni-Moslem, Arab nationalist)

writes apropos the forthcoming meeting of the Arab League Political Committee that the Arab countries are pulled by three currents: the currents of American policy, of British policy and of Arab public opinion. "Therefore, the discussion of the Arab League states will be confused and will not come out with any definite result at the present time at least." However, the paper demands that the Arab countries take a definite and clear stand on the present international situation and says in part:

"The perplexed question which is now being put by Arab public opinion is this: what is the interest of the Arabs in hurling themselves into a horrible battle the fate of which is unknown?"

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AN-NAHAR

devotes almost its entire issue to the proceedings of the trial of its chief editor, Ghassan Twaini, by the Press Court yesterday. The Court will pass its verdict on Ghassan Twaini today.